A Second Argument

For a more Full and Firm

UNION

AMONGST

All Good Protestants;

WHEREIN

The NONCONFORMISTS Taking the SACRAMENT after the Manner of the CHURCH of *ENGLAND*, is Justified.

The Root and Foundation

Of the *POPISH PLOT*

Further Discovered.

In a LETTER to a Friend.

BODLEIANA · BIBLIOTHECA ·

Entred according to Order.

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Honoured Sir,

THIS not unknown to you that for Seven years last past it hath been our endeavour to correct some of the extravagant strains too apparently found in many well-meaning Dissenters from the Church of *England*; and what by good Arguments in private, and the Example of some who have had neer Thirty years Conversation amongst them; together with a sight of their folly, by being debarr'd of their Civil Rights as Englishmen, for their groundless Scrupulosities in Religion and the close concurrency of Penal

Proſecution, they have at laſt been prevail'd upon to come to Church, and with Sobriety and Patience to hear the good and able Miniſters of the Church of *England*, to their no ſmall contentment and ſatisfaction: And ſo far we have gain'd the point, as to diſappoint our Adverſaries, whoſe Work it has been to divide, that they might take the ſpoil; and whoſe Deſign for a long time (as much as in them lay) hath been to put the Proteſtant Clergy upon Perſecuting, thereby to juſtifie their old accuſtomed Cruelty, and then prepoſſeſs the minds of the unwary, That this Proteſtant Church and Miniſtry was really Antichriſtian, and not ſafely to be communicated with or confided in; by which means they have for many years kept a wide gapp open, in hopes the more eaſily to get into Power; when there ſhould be an opportunity: for whilſt the Engliſh Church and Clergy does think all the Diſſenters Hereticks, miſled and alike dangerous, if not more than the Papiſts are, they make no bones in proſecuting Penal Laws againſt them, even to the utter ruin of Perſons and Families in many places. And on the other hand they influence and perſwade the poor ſimple Diſſenters that Perſecution is an infallible Mark of an Antichriſtian Church; and by ſcaring Cautions warn them upon the peril of forfeiting their ſalvation, not to come near them, not to touch, taſte, or handle with them: Nay ſo ſevere have theſe Sons of *Leviathan* been upon the Conſciences of the Nonconformiſts, as to corrupt them with a Conceit, That it is a Sin to go into the Places where the Engliſh Clergy Preach, becauſe

cauſe they are Idol Temples; a greater Sin to hear them preach and pray there, becauſe 'tis as Meat offered to an Idol: but like the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, eternally impardonable, to communicate with them in the Lords Supper. When in truth there is amongſt them all things neceſſary to ſalvation; of which I could never yet learn more than theſe Four, *viz.*

1. The Learning of a good Catechiſm to aid and conduct their Faith.

2. A good and well compoſed Form of Prayer to diſcharge their Devotion.

3. To hear learned and good Men Preach to revive and quicken them to Duty.

4. To Square and Regulate their Lives by Moral Precepts (or the Law of Nature) the which whoſoever ſhall humbly and carefully obſerve, conſtantly and conſciencioufly perform, we will aſſure them Salvation, and undertake to anſwer to God for them, and be content to ſtand Chargeable with their Blood if they do miſcarry; being indiſputably aſſured that it is more ſafe to rely upon theſe Principles for Salvation than upon all humane Pardons and Indulgences under Heaven: becauſe theſe things do really conſtitute a good Man, which God for his *Truth and Juſtice* ſake cannot deſtroy or damn: *Therefore that we* may anſwer the *Command of God to his Prophet* to take the *ſtumbling blocks out of the way of the* People, and thereby diſappoint the wicked purpoſes of ungodly men, ſave our poor Neighbours and their Families from ruin by Penal Laws and Erroneous Conſciences, and a Glorious Nation from deſtruction by ſubtle Adverſaries; we ſhall endeavour

vour to evince that they safely may communicate in the Lords Supper with their Brethren of the Church of *England*: In order to which it is proposed,

1. To Communicate in the Supper is either a Civil or a Spiritual Thing, for betwixt these there is no Medium: If Civil, as such it may be done, because no where forbidden by God.

2. 'Tis Commanded by the Laws of our Countrey.

3. 'Tis no natural injury to a mans Neighbour, therefore can be no real hurt or prejudice to his own Soul; for what God forbids not, the Laws of my Countrey commands to be done, and my Neighbour no way injured by, cannot be really hurtful to my self; there being no Law of common good and safety violated, no Right either Humane or Divine invaded; and for Obedience to the Laws of our Countrey, in all matters purely Civil we are all agreed about. If it be Spiritual, then it is Spiritual Goodness or Spiritual Wickedness, there being no Medium betwixt these two (neither:) If *Spiritual Goodness, it cannot be* dangerous and unsafe because we have a Word of God that *presses to whatsoever is good, honest*, and *excellent*: Besides, the Law of Nature obliges to all degrees of Goodness within our power to perform. If it be Spiritual Wickedness, then it lies either in the Matter made use of, or in the Manner of the Administration; in the Excess and Defect of the Matter, or in the Design of the Thing; but Wickedness lies in none of these (therefore is not Spiritual wickedness.)

1. In

1. In the Matter (*viz.*) The Bread and the Wine, it cannot lie, becauſe both are innocent and harmleſs, and fitly agreeing to Divine Inſtitution. In the Manner of Adminiſtration it cannot lie, becauſe it is ſolemnly perform'd with holy Prayers and Thankſgiving, and with no ſmall degree of Seriouſneſs and Gravity. It cannot lie either in Exceſs or Defect, becauſe none is allow'd rudely to take it themſelves, to eat unto Gluttony, or drink unto Drunkenneſs. In the Defect it cannot lie, becauſe given in both Kinds, and not more ſparingly than the nature of the thing requires, and is in common uſe amongſt others. In the Deſign it cannot poſſibly be, becauſe all that is propoſed in it, is a due Preparation for it, and a Thankful Remembrance of the Bleſſed Sacrifice of a Dear Redeemer. And if no Evil in any of theſe, we challenge the whole World to ſhew any Formal or Poſitive Wickedneſs.

2. If it be Spiritual Wickedneſs, then the higheſt Acts or Inſtances of the Church of *Englands* Goodneſs (which is the Preparing Perſons for a Right Receiving of it, the Endeavours to ſtrengthen Mens Faith thereby, and to increaſe and continue Brotherly Love, is Poſitive Wickedneſs; And if ſo, what will become of all that have died in this Communion? And what condition are all thoſe in that are left behind (in this Communion?) Surely if the higheſt Acts of Goodneſs in the beſt Church Men is down right Spiritual Wickedneſs, then the beſt Church men muſt be all wicked men; for if the Light that is in them be

Dark-

Darkneſs, how great is their Darkneſs! If I miſtake not, ſuch a Dogmatical Concluſion is the higheſt Violation of Chriſtian Charity under Heaven: And whatſoever men pretend, as to Talk and Faith, and the like, they do render themſelves by the want of Charity to be but ſounding Braſs and tinkling Cimbals, offering manifeſt violence to that Sacred Text, *Judge not, leſt you be judged.* And how ſuch can be aſſured of eſcaping that diſmal Sentence, *What meaſure you mete to others, the ſame ſhall be meted to you again:* I yet underſtand not.

3. That Part of this Kingdom that bears the Denomination of the Church of *England*, is either the Church of God, or it is the Synagogue of the Devil? If the Church of God, it cannot be hazardous and unſafe to Communicate with it in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; becauſe it is an holy Rite truly appropriated to the Church of God: and to joyn with the Church of God in one of the higheſt Inſtances of Poſitive Religion, cannot poſſibly be dangerous and unſafe. But if it be indeed the Synagogue of the Devil, and the Communicating with it Poſitive Wickedneſs, let it be demonſtratively made appear, and we will reſolve (by Gods grace aſſiſting us) to be hanged upon Gibbets, to be burned at a Stake, to ſuffer the worſt of Deaths and Dangers, rather than to Incorporate our ſelves into ſuch a Diabolical Corporation. But if this be not, or cannot be done, he that ſuffers ruin and death for a refuſal, may go out of the World with a lie in his right hand,

and

and die under a far worse Sentence or Censure than did *Abner*, and miss his expected Advancement for it in the next World.

4. He that shall Communicate with the good Members of the Church of *England*, shall certainly Communicate with as good Men as any is under the Copes of Heaven: For if we refer to the Clergy, then for Excellency of Natural Parts, Profoundness of Learning, Evenness of Temper, Generosity of Principles, most admirable Sermons and Doctrines, holiness of Life and largeness of Charity, we challenge the whole Earth to overmatch them. Indeed such is the *English* Clergy at this day, that I despair to see any out-do them till *Elias* comes with Extraordinary Revelation to restore all things; and if it be damnable to Communicate with such men (Good God) then what shall we do? Whether shall we fly for help? Where shall we pitch our Tents, and where shall we fix our Glory? Oh! how shall we be able to rejoyce in being debarr'd of our National Priviledges, the having our Estates lost, our Families ruin'd, our Native Countrey expos'd to great hazard by Popery, our Wives and Children weeping, our Persons banish'd and exposed to the mercy of Strange Countreys, or hang'd at home for an obstinate humour, in refusing to eat and drink in a godly sort with some of the best of Men. What Judgment will the Martyrs that died in Queen *Mary*'s days make of us? Can they account us Martyrs without condemning themselves, who all died in the same Faith and Practice that we are invited to imbrace?

5. If it be dangerous and unsafe to Communicate with the *English* Church, it must be because she is no Church at all, or at best but an Antichristian Church. An Antichristian Church she cannot be, because she hath renounced the Power and Headship of Antichrist, and in her constant Doctrines and Practice keeps up and defends a Separation and Detestation of him. If she be no Church at all, then these two dangerous Consequents will follow:

1. That the best People in the World, who profess the True God and the True Saviour, the True Rule, *viz.* The Holy Scripture, the Two Sacraments, at least in the Name and Order of them; and who have made an Agreement to own, defend, and stand by all the Necessary Articles of the *Christian* Faith (which is the only Foundation of a True Church) I say then such a People, that hath all the Necessaries and Essentials of a True Church, and yet is no Church at all? how Phanatical this is, let all wise men judge? But,

2. As such a Sentiment must needs be a Contradiction to such a Supposition; so it concludes that there is no Church at all: for if a People under such Qualifications be no Church, then there can be no such thing as a True Church in the World. For the Sectaries cannot be a True Church, because either they have made no Solemn Covenant with God and one with another, which is the onely right Basis and Foundation of a Church State; or if they have, it cannot be better than that already set forth: and then the same Cause issues in the same Effect. And that the Sectaries are the True

Church of God and no other, I cannot yet be well satisfied; because the greatest number of them do hold Principles dangerously Heretical and most abominably Abusive of the most Holy and Blessed God: such as indeed do no less in their direct Consequences than un-god Him, by making of him the greatest Author of Mischief in the World, and the Transactor of such Profound Folly, that was never yet found in any weak and silly Mortal under Heaven? and all this by their idle Dreams about his Peremptory and Eternal Decrees. For if, as they hold, God hath so limited his Power and bound up his own Hands (by unalterable Decrees) as that he has left himself no Liberty to advance the most Excellent and Vertuous, nor to degrade the most Profligate and Vile, what greater Folly can be found amongst Mortal Men? If those they call the Elect shall deny his Being, blaspheme him to his Face, confront his Soveraignty, wrest the Scepter from him, trample upon his Holy Name and Glory, laugh at the Indignities and Contempt cast upon his most Sacred Image, yet they are as sure to be saved, as Heaven is to abide: and as firmly fastened to the highest Station in Glory (to which they were design'd) as are the Chiefest Order of Angels. And if any of the other Part, *viz.* the not Elect, shall plead for God, vindicate his Name, defend his Soveraignty, and maintain his Honour to the last end of their Life and Power, yet to the Regions of Darkness they must go, to bear *Beelzebub* and his Black Tribe company, to take their ever to be lamented and dismal Lot; with *Cain*

and *Judas*; becauſe God has left himſelf no power or liberty to reward them for their good Service.

Oh excellent and ſtupendious Folly! did ever Traveller to the utmoſt Mountains meet with the like in the Ruler of any People. Neither is this all, but indeed the leaſt part of what they impute to the beſt of Beings. For he is the greateſt, nay the ſole Author of all the Miſchiefs in the World. Did *Beelzebub* tranſgreſs in Heaven? Did *Adam* fall in Paradice? Did *Cain* kill *Abel*? *Simeon* and *Levi* murther the Men of *Sechem*? Did *David* commit Adultery, and treacherouſly murther *Uriah*? 'Twas the inevitable Fate of the Divine Decrees God ordained *Judas* to betray *Jeſus*, the *Jews* by wicked hands to ſlay him, *Solomon* to have a Thouſand Whores, all the Roman Emperors and Popes to make Bloody Shambles of the Chriſtian World by Barbarous Butcheries; that when Men are Drunk, Lie, Swear, Blaſpheme, Challenge God to damn them; when they Rob, Steal, Shed Blood, are ſent to *Newgate* and *Tyburn* for Felonies, poor miſerable Wretches they could no ways help it; an Irreſiſtible Deſtiny was the Cauſe of it: And yet that they ſhould be hang'd here, and damn'd hereafter, for doing of it, altho by the ſame God forbidden, and commanded to the contrary with the greateſt Threats and Seriouſneſs: If there can be ſuch a profound Diſſembler, ſuch a deceitful Worker, ſuch an horrible Contriver, ſuch an evil Ordainer, and miſchievous Author, that is not a great and mighty Devil, I will confeſs my ſelf miſtaken. Now

if a ſound and true Notion of God, be the firſt and foundation Principle of Religion, and conſequently of a True Church, then ſuch as have it not; but the manifeſt and direct contrary, can be no True Church, becauſe upon a wicked and falſe Foundation. Such I am ſure there are among the Sectaries, and if ſuch a Villainous Body of People is the beſt and the true Church, that even in their firſt and main Principle thus bloodily murther their Maker in his moſt admirable Attributes of Wiſdom, Holineſs, and Goodneſs; I do wonder in my mind what kind of people the World is. If *Jacob* ſaid of the little Murther his Sons committed upon Men, *Curſed be their Anger for it was fierce; and their Wrath, for it was cruel: O my Soul, come not thou into their ſecret, unto their aſſembly, mine honour, be not thou united*; to them: what ſhall we ſay of ſuch Monſters that murther God their Maker? Shall we joyn with them as a Pious Church?

But to put the Matter further out of Doubt, if it can be, that the Sectaries cannot be a Church in the beſt ſenſe, becauſe they are ſo giddy and fooliſh, as that they want Wit and Policy for Church Government, and ſo penurious and covetous, that they will not allow what is requiſite to the keeping up of a Church State: And can any man imagine that ever the moſt Wiſe and Good God would truſt a Church State in the hands of ſuch Men?

For their Wit and Policy, take a ſhort Specimen of it.

Would

1. Would they have our Arch-bishops down? Yes no doubt.

2. Would they have the rest of the Bishops down? Yes.

3. Would they have the best Clergy about the City and Suburbs of *London* down? Yes.

4. Would they have all the Clergy of *England* down? Yes.

5. would they have all the Ecclesiastical Revenues (*viz.*) the unlawful Maintenance by Tythes down? Yes.

6. Would they have all the Schools of Learning in both Universities down? Yes. Because the Language of the Beast, that opposes the Spirits Teaching (set forth by *Samuel How*) comes from thence.

7. Would they have the Laws that do force the Covetous to pay Parish Levies for the Maintenance of the Poor down? Yes. Because no Rule for it in Scripture.

Very well, then, raze *Babylon* by the very Foundations.

But hearken Brethren, Here is a very large empty space, and seeing Nature abhors a Vacuity, what shall we leave nothing to fill up again? Must all the People and Parishes of *England* be totally left without Preachers? Oh! No by no means. How then, good now? Why they must all have recourse to us, and we must supply them. That is it, Sir, That the Sectaries do aime at, to have all the People come to them (and that is the meaning of so many new publick places being erected) and then for a filling up this large empty space. 1. You

1. You ſhall in the room of the two Archbiſhops, *viz. Canterbury* and *York*, have a *Tinker* and a *Taylor*, men of great confidence and long ſtanding.

2. For the Four great Biſhopricks of *London*, *Winchester*, *Ely*, and *Durham*, you ſhall have a Waterman, a Shoemaker, a Coffee-man, and a Hat-Dreſſer.

3. For the other Biſhops, and the Clergy about the City and Suburbs of *London*, you ſhall have Men of an inferior Rank to theſe in point of Learning and Ability, and Suppliments for all the reſt ſuitable hereunto againſt the next Debate. In the mean while will it be amiſs to ſend to *France*, *Germany*, and the *Low Countreys*, to acquaint them with what an honourable Reformation in *England* is deſired and purſued by a great many. But having thus diſcours'd a little about their Wit, we come now to their Covetouſneſs, which is inconſiſtent with a Church State, and the good Government thereof; which take in Three Inſtances.

1. For Forty years laſt paſt they have made no Bank, built no Free Schools, purchaſed no Church Lands, not ſo much as will be ſufficient to ſupport their own Party.

2. They have lived in the total neglect of that great Moral Duty of paying to God the Tenths of their Increaſe; which the Patriarchs before the Law made ſo much Conſcience of: and the detaining of which God accounts the higheſt Act of Robbery, even no leſs than a Robbing of God himſelf: *Mal.* 3. 8, 9.

3. For the Rich and Trading part of them, before they will consent to have all things common, as the Christians in the Primitive Times had (as well as Water Baptism and laying on of Hands) they will see the Poor suffer, and their Preachers go a Begging; as I have known divers of them has done.

Now Sir, This People neglecting to make provision for them of their own Houshold, and thereby denying the Faith, and become worse than Infidels, as they are, not to be trusted with the Government of a National Church, so they cannot be a Right and True Church themselves in the best Sense. And if neither these nor the Church of *England* be the True Church, then the Church of *Rome* must, or else where shall we find it? Tho Sir I do love the People of the *Romish* Communion well, yet am very loth it should be accounted the True and Right Church, and come into Esteem amongst us under that Notion; because it may be inconvenient upon divers Accounts.

1. We shall then be in danger of having a *Popish* Parliament, which will be always troubling and tempting our Kings to let in *Popery*; which will be a Violation of the Sacred Oath and high Impeachment of their Integrity and Honour (and then our *English* Church will be new modell'd, all our best Ministers turn'd out of the best Benefices, which must be resigned up to a Herd of *Pharaoh*'s lean Kine, that will come flocking in like the Armies of Flies and Froggs upon the Land of *Egypt*. Our good Book of Common Prayer

Prayer will be changed, then which *I* think few or none can make a better. The Writ *Hæretico Comburendo* will be reſtored again to its former force, and thereby the beſt Defenders of our Religion againſt Popery be forced to pledge *Philpot* and *Cranmer*, *Ridley* and *Latimer*, in a warm Cup of *Smithfield* Flames. All our Married Clergy muſt be reputed Fornicators, their Wives accounted Whores, and their Children Baſtards, to the exceeding great grief and ſorrow of their Aged Parents on both ſides, who carefully plac'd their Sons out to Learning on the one hand, that thereby they might come to honour: and moſt tenderly brought up their Daughters like Ladies on the other hand; gave good Portions with them, and thought them preferr'd when matched to the ſettled Clergy: not dreaming of a perpetual Reproach and Infamy upon their Poſterity, *&c.* All our Nobles and Gentry will loſe a great part of their Eſtates, which was formerly Church Lands, and ſtill laid claim to by the *Roman* Church, to the leſſening of their Revenue, impairing their Honour, and provocation to their Off-ſpring. The People will be generally filled with diſcontent, who are ſtrangely poſſeſt with a diſlike and fear of *Popery*. *London* will much abate in its Trade and Grandeur. All Proteſtant Merchants will be put to flight into other Countreys to ſave their own and the lives of their dear beloved Ladies, whom they value above themſelves. The whole Land from *Dan* to *Beerſheba* will be inſlaved ſo inſufferably by an ignorant and unclean Brood, that

there will be a necessity to keep up a standing Army to awe the People into a quiet Subjection: And this kind of Red-Coat Slavery the Nation of *England* never approv'd. Besides many do fear, if *Popery* comes in, there will yet be many more places set on fire, to the prejudice of the whole Kingdom. We should now have come to the little Objections made by the Sectaries against taking the Sacrament with the *English* Church, as that there are ill Members in it, and they injoyn'd to take it Kneeling, and the like: But a further Progress in a way of Answer, shall be deferr'd to a New Command from you. And dear Sir, after giving you Toleration to expose the first Argument relating to this Design, if you think it may be serviceable to the Publick, I admit your mind to a pleasant Recess, and rest

Your very humble and

most obliged Servant, &c.

FINIS.